

ABERFIELD

POSITIVE INFLUENCE

How to handle a radio interview

- Good preparation is essential to achieving your objectives in a radio interview.
- Never agree to an interview until you're fully comfortable with every aspect:
 - Do you know why you have been approached?
 - Do you know why you have been approached?
 - Do you know what programme it is for? How do they treat interviewees?
 - When will it be broadcast?
 - Is it a live or pre-recorded interview?
 - Do they want a 'soundbite' or something more substantial?
 - Who will be doing the interview?
 - What 'angle' are they planning to take?
 - Where do they plan to interview you? Studio or location?
 - Who else is being interviewed on this subject? What might they say?
- If you're not the right person for this, is there someone else within your organisation who is?
- If you're not comfortable with doing the interview, be prepared to say No. Better still, point the journalist in the direction of a more suitable interviewee.
- Once you've decided to do the interview, make sure you've enough time to prepare your key messages – a maximum of three.
- It is acceptable to have notes with you for a radio interview, although preferably they should be nothing more than reminders of your key messages. Use them as prompts, but never try to read anything word for word. Your audience will know!
- It's not acceptable to shuffle papers, make clicking noises with a pen, tap the desk or make any other noise that isn't your voice (unless you're asked to!). If you're being interviewed in the office, find a quiet room. Radio microphones are very sensitive.
- Don't be afraid to ask what the first question will be. If the journalist has done nothing else, he/she will have thought about their opening question. If you know what it is, you can work out how to get onto your agenda quickly.
- And remember...the journalist wants a good interview as much as you do.